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LEST WE FORGET- THE NAZI ERA.

Jan.25,1991

Saddam Hussein - the present-day Hitler - released a flood of memories in me.

I was born during a war and I shall die during a war, even though the Persian Gulf conflict just started. My generation had to live through W,W,I,W.W.II and the Holocaust,the Korean and Vietnam war und now this. "Es kann der Beste nicht in Frieden leben ,wenn es dem boesenNachbar nicht gefaellt"(The best person cannot live in peace, when it does not please his evil neighbor..)

For the past two years I could not continue my autobiography for you- my grandchildren-because the Nazi era was too painful.But this new war awakened all the memories.

Hitler and Saddam Hussein are both most evil men but both are created or fostered by governments and countries that are considered humane and decent. The entire West allowed the monster Hitler to do his horrible deeds ,because they used him as a shield against Communist Russia. So was Saddam allowed to flourish (by supplying him with all kinds of means of destruction) as a weapon against Iran. Millions of lives were lost then and thousands of young innocent people will be sacrificed now.

April 22,1991 (my b'day)

As I start to transcribe my notes, the war "Desert Storm" is officially over. But peace has not come to that region and so my initial reaction still holds true. No "Victory" is won as long as a cruel dictator is still in power.

To continue my personal history:

No country wanted to take Jews ,fleeing from Hitler,unless you had lots of money or they needed you. By the time Hitler invaded my homeland Austria,he did not allow any money to be taken out of the country.

The" ANSCHLUSS " (annexation) occurred on Friday March 12,1938 and I immediately wrote letters to places where we might receive asylum. For some reason that now escapes me- one of these countries was Paraguay. I also stood on a long line at the American Embassy in Vienna without a shred of hope of ever emigrating to the U.S.A. When my turn came to fill out a form, some unconscious force made me put my mother's name on the application and add my own name as her child. It was a stroke of luck : two years later the quota had reached her name and she could accompany me to the U,S,A. I had no trouble immigrating as the wife of a man already there..

THE LAST THREE MONTHS IN VIENNA

The father of a friend of mine, a policeman , told me to try to get out as fast as possible.Even though only men were rounded up at the moment ,he warned us women would be next .On the streets "brown shirts" grabbed Jews,gave them toothbrushes and made them scrub tne sidewalks. One such hoodlum grabbed me but my mother ,who was only half-Jewish, intervened and they let me go. This in-between state of my mother forced her to to the "election" Hitler held shortly after his take over. She,with the rest of the of the non-Jewish population ,was given a ballot ,approving the Fuehrer. She did not want to leave Vienna especially as my 82 year old grandmother still lived with us. I tried desparately to get my grandmother into a nursing home and almost succeded.She had been deaf for over forty years but we communicated through lip reading .

We had not told her of our plans and what was going on in our country. But she ,somehow, put two and two together. One morning a policeman rang our bell:My grandmother had thrown herself off our balcony..... the third suicide in my young life.

- GANGSTER RIVALRY:TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

England needed domestic servants and the YWCA arranged employment for my mother and me as cook and parlor maid. We were thus able to leave Vienna in June 1938,luckily before the " Kristallnacht " (crystal night). On Nov .10 1938 remaining Jews were rounded up,all their property confiscated,synagogues,stores etc. smashed to pieces with broken glass (crystal) everywhere.

Yet our last few months in Austria were not without danger, horror and anxiety.

We had to sell all our possessions including my father's picture collection. It did not bother me,as I was anxious to leave. What enraged me was how non-Jews (including some of my good friends) were glad to grab these "bargains" as we sold everything for a pittance. However it devastated my mother .

Tobacconist stores (Tabak Trafiken) were franchises from the state and my mother had run my grandmother's very successfully for the past four years since my father's tragic Death. Under Nazi rule she had to turn it over to the state. In anticipation of that event she had taken out as much cash as possible. Our most reliable saleswoman had had to leave,but we found another employee who seemed trustworthy.

One morning the doorbell rang : a stormtrooper stood outside the door He told us to come with him. You could not resist such an invitation. He took us to another part of the Leopoldstadt (Vienna's second district) into a basement. There he forced us to do all kind of gymnastic exercises. I did not show him how scared] was and told him I would be glad to do all the exercises as long as he left my mother alone. After a while he took us home again. It was not the end of the story....

He told us if we wanted to live,to meet him next morning in a cafe with all the money we had hidden. Our "trusted " employee had betrayed us. We did not know what to do; we could see the Police Precinct from our windows and policemen there used to be friendly and helpful before 1938. But we knew from more recent experience that the police would not want to help Jews. I called my friend ,the policeman's daughter and she had a daring idea, outrageous and very dangerous for both of us. " Meet me at Gestapo headquarters!" It meant going into the lion's den. At the entrance of the former Hotel Metropole we were rudely separated. How dare she , a pure Aryan help a dirty Jewess ? Hilde countered she was a proud Austrian-German and sure the Fuehrer would not tolerate injustice committed by a low underling. She left and I was ushered up a broad marble staircase into a huge ballroom, filled with black uniformed S.S. troupers - the Nazi Elite guard.

In moments of extreme stress or danger one loses fear and survival instincts come to the fore. I only felt the absurdity of my situation. I told this daunting assembly very calmly that my mother and I were blackmailed by an S.A. man (hoping for some kind of rivalry existing between the S.A and the Gestapo). Counting on these gentlemen's "fairness" I asked for their help.

My speech must have sounded totally ludicrous and improbable -a Jewess appealing to top Nazis. After moments of tense silence I was interrogated: Had I the intention to leave Austria? Yes, we had plans to go to England. They would help us ,provided we would leave within the next two weeks. - At that time the holocaust had not yet been planned. Only after no country wanted to take all German-Austrian Jews was their extermination,the "Final Solution " set in motion.

What follows sounds like a cheap thriller. We were told to keep the rendez-vous and hand over an envelope (filled not with money but shredded newspapaper) to this blackmailer.At that moment the S.S. would grab and arrest him.

My mother and I spent a sleepless night in a neighbor's (Karl Gerber's

mother) apartment , in one bed ,holding one another tight,shaking with fear, - The next morning we took the trolley to the cafe. In Vienna the tram consists of two cars and we noticed two men dressed in dark suits in the other car. I felt sure the S.S.wanted to get rid of unwanted competition for Jewish property but I was also sure that in a gunbattle they would not worry if two Jews got maimed or killed.

We entered the cafe with trepidation and suddenly and eerily we were faced with a strange apparition. There in that dingy restaurant stood our piano. Dozens of people had come to our apartment buying our belongings - and our piano had landed here! For a brief moment we forgot the reason for our visit. The next events happened with lightning speed: we handed the gangster the envelope, the door flew open, two men barged in, guns drawn, grabbed the hoodlum and were gone.

We were unhurt and free!

THE GERMAN AIR FORCE OFFICER .

I am writing this as Scud missiles rain down on Israel. Fifty two years later and still no"peace on earth". It helps to unburden myself of one emotional baggage before loading up with new anxieties.

Our beautiful apartment was requisitioned for a German airforce officer and we had to move in with our friend Frau Gerber downstairs. (Your parents met her son Karl when they visited Vienna- she was eventually killed in Auschwitz).

From 1933 - 1938 when Hitler took over Austria,Jews in Germany lived segregated, still relatively safely, although forbidden to work as intellectuals: doctors ,teachers,actors ,etc. Few atrocities were committed. But in Austria brutality reigned from the first day of the "Anschluss". "Das Goldene Wiener Herz" (the golden Viennese heart) had gone into hiding. Our officer ,coming from Germany ,was appalled by what he saw. He apologized to us for occupying our place but we assured him we knew it was not of his doing. He was very handsome, tall , blond, blue eyed, the ideal "Aryan" But he was not a Nazi.

I am sure ,being with the Luftwaffe, he did not survive the war.

We were due to leave soon for England but encountered another unforseen snag. In order to get an exit visa you needed a "Sitten zeugnis" -proof that you had never been convicted of a felony.

This is what had happened: As an art student I did occasional illustrations and posters. One of my clients were the "Bergfreunde" (friends of mountains) an offshoot of the "Naturfreunde" (friends of nature) a proscribed organization wrongly labeled communist

by the previous Fascist Dollfuss regime. In fact it was a very harmless nature loving club. I was commissioned to make a poster for their ball "Town and Country" . I was supposed to make a lithograph and as I had no idea how this process worked I made a very simple abstract design: three black open triangles for mountains and some rectangles for houses on the bottom. Little did I realize that the three mountains looked like 3 arrows, the secret sign for the lately forbidden socialists. My very effective poster was put on the "Litfassaeulen" (round advertizing kiosks) all over Vienna. The poster was confiscated ,the Bergfreunde punished for " inciting riot " and I the artist got a bad police record. Luckily it had not happened under the Nazis and they were no friends of the former fascist regime - another proof of rivalry among gangsters.

I told our officer how he could he could help us: "Please go to the appropriate authorities, tell them : 'I want these goddam lousy Jews out of here so please give them the exit visa and good riddance!" He felt embarrassed to talk that way, but I told him the more anti-semitic he sounded the more it would help. He did and we got our exit visa.

THE BARON .

We knew we could not take any money out. Our first and trusted employee had met a Dutch woman who agreed to take a small amount with her to Holland and hold it there for us, which indeed she did.

In the last week we went on a shopping spree. We had never been splurgers and it was an eerie feeling for us as well as a Christian friend who at some point ,for a moment forgetting our circumstances,almost envied us. We bought cameras and other photographic equipment, the best sable brushes and oilpaints and good clothes.The latter, if we became uniformed domestics , would not be used for a long time,nor would the art material.

Now we still had to go and declare our jewelry and hand it over. I went to the appropriate office where a middleaged gentleman interviewed me. At the end he said:" Send all your luggage ahead. Get on the train as if you were tourists ,just with hand luggage. Wear all your jewelry on your body,cover earrings with your hair and hat. Good luck!" And so we saved all my grandmother's heirlooms.

This gentleman - a righteous Gentile - killed himself a few months later.

THE TRIP INTO EXILE .

On the train ride from Vienna through Germany my mother and I sat

stiffly in an almost catatonic state. Our fears were hidden under elegant new clothes that made us appear as tourists ,bent on a pleasure trip. It worked : we reached the Dutch border without ever having to show our passports with the "J" in it. - Only recently did I learn , that Switzerland had asked the Germans to put that infamous "J" in passports to keep Jews out of their country....

My then boyfriend Joe Bauer had fled to Holland already in May, entering as "guest" of his sister and her husband. Thanks to the funds from that unknown Dutch lady,we could afford a brief reunion in Amsterdam. Then on we went to Hook von Holland,the port from which a boat took us to Harwich,England. Crossing the Channel can often be very rough.My mother and I were so emotionally and physically drained,we fell on our bunks in total exhaustion and did not wake up until the boat had landed.

ENGLAND

We started our new life as domestic servants on the estate of Major B.Farquaher HUGGINS in Haywards Heath,Sussex. He was retired from colonial service; Mrs. H. ran a kennel of dachshounds. As drastic a change as our life underwent now , it was only a foretaste of the caste system in which the British empire operated then. Mrs.H. treated us with condescension, the major was a friendly chap, who introduced us to British cuisine. My mother had been used to the "Wiener Kueche"(Viennese cooking) and so had a lot to learn.We had to make not only mental and physical changes but drastic gastronomical ones as well.

In Vienna ,meat is prepared in small portions: cutlets, chops, gulyas (stew), meatloaf. When Major Huggins brought a ca. 20lbs hunk of beef into the kitchen my mother proceded to cut it up into small fillets. He became apoplectic when he saw what she was up to. So here was the first lesson: Roastbeef ,Mutton is roasted in bulk,carved by the master at the table .Leftovers are sliced as luncheon meats (cold cuts).What's left after that,scraped off the bone ,becomes a meat pie,i.e.Shepard's pie-ground meat covered with mashed potatoes or coverd with a pie crust. In time under the major's tutelage , my mother became an expert in steak and kidney pie,puddings,mince pie even making (horror of horrors) suet puddings. Though I had to serve all the meals , I remember the major racing himself from kitchen to dining room with a soufflé to prevent its collapse.

We lived in a small cottage attached to the mainbuilding with a sitting room ,bedroom and bath.It was lovely, but we were marooned with no human contact whatsoever,half a day off every Wednesday,one entire Sunday every two weeks.Wages were a pittance: 2 Lbs for mother the cook, 1Lb. for me.There was no place to go,no transportation,no movie ,no teashop in that small town, (besides I believe everything was closed onSundays) so we stayed home. We befriended a black cat and when she disappeared one day we got another one, black with a white face and white paws- and my love for felines dates from that time.

In September '38 primeminister Chamberlin came back from the (in)famous meeting with Hitler and, his umbrella held high,he proclaimed " Peace in our Time !) " An English master never held conversations with you concerning your personal life, As a servant you were a non-person. While serving lunch I had to listen to their elation that peace had been achieved.Later on I broke the code of silence and blurted out:" You can't make peace with Hitler! England will pay a heavy price!" They were stunned at my impertinence. Many years later I heard from Major Huggins: He had lost all three sons in the war....

There was Derek, the eldest who came home occasionally and Rodney who commuted to the City and Tommy who was sent to Sandhurst (the equivalent of West Point) against his wishes. Mrs.Huggins had wanted a daughter and really hated that last boy. So when he came home on a visit he loved to hang around in the kitchen, getting some attention unattainable from his "Mater".

We had been cooped up for ten months in virtual isolation and solitude. On Nov.10 would have been my parents' silver wedding anniversary. I must have made a rare personal remark ,because in a sudden good will gesture they took us to London and to lunch at Harrods',the most famous department store. It was a strange outing: seeing us for the first time dressed as ladies and not in our servants' uniform - I always wore a black dress and white cap and apron- startled our employers. The major innocently complimented us on our looks , which turned his wife into a jealous shrew. She made life very difficult for us after that trip.

Years later,the wonderful series UPSTAIRS-DOWNSTAIRS made a profound impression on us.

Our workday started before 6a.m. and ended at 10 p.m or later. I was housemaid,parlor-,upstairs- and kitchenmaid. My duties were to bring "Early Tea" to guests and some masters or mistresses; set the fire places,clean the entire house,set up elaborate breakfasts on the side-

board, serve lunch and dinner according to very specific rules.(Having taken a "Servier Kurs"-a course for domestic service before leaving Vienna came in very handy.)

Except for very depressing mail from friends,we had no contact with the outside world. Only much later did we find out about the horrible "Kristallnacht" that happened on my mother's silverwedding anniverary- the afore mentioned looting ,burning ,smashing glass and killing Jews all over the "Grossdeutsche Reich" .The BBC then did not broadcast such news.... The YWCA had made an agreement with the Huggins' that if we stayed one full year they would refund our fare from Vienna to England. Joe had gotten a visitor's visa to come from Holland and so we gave our employers notice after our year was up to try our luck in London.

Being now "experienced servants" we confidently looked for jobs,Part of the permission to enter Great Britain was ,that any work other than in a household was forbidden to us. There was a scarcity of domestics in the country but London was overrun with refugees.

SIR ABRAHAM AND HIS LADY .

We finally were recommended to a physician,Sir Abraham. His wife, Lady A.,gave us a tour of this very lavish apartment -on the 7th floor. In a snobbish and arrogant way she detailed to us our duties,which sounded overwhelming even after having gotten use to do very hard work. She seemed to take a special antisemitic delight to put these "Jews " in their place. She pointed out ,we would only be allowed to use the fire escape - seven flights down - to leave or reenter the apartment on our half day off. Before we left ,she ushered us into the office of Sir Abraham. Left alone with him,an amiable bearded man -looking like the Jewish patriarch himself- he sheepishly admitted that he felt bad for the plight of the Jews under Hitler ,but that his wife - a Gentile- did not want him to remember his past and wanted to associate only with High(non-Jewish)Society. He wished us luck and we had no choice but to accept this position. We were to start as soon as they received references from Major andMrs. Huggins. We expected a glowing report as they had always expressed satisfaction with our work, especially my mother,s cooking. No one can describe our shock and dismay when the Abrahams canceled our employment,having received very poor references.

Much later I found out the contents of that report:We were both dirty and lazy,my mother one of the worst cooks. I also found out that theyhad

resented our leaving them and wanted to make sure no one else would hire us. We were in a desperate situation. Our meager savings were going fast. Finally an agency booked us into a god-forsaken place in Hampshire whose owners for some reason (we soon found out why) could not get any servants,

They were CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS ,a young lower middle class couple with upper class airs, Their name I have mercifuuly forgotten ,but they had a little three year old daughter Mary. It was a small house, no guests, and could have been a tolerable job, had it not been for the mistress , who wanted at all cost to show us we were just lowly servants, The class system was still very strict, priests told their flock not to rise above"their station" There was ,however ,a hierarchy even in the "Downstairs" world. A cook was accorded special respect and always addressed as "Mrs," The rest of the staff was called by their first name. My mother was "Mrs.Rapp"- although not by this woman who called her "Mary". That in itself would not have been so bad,had she not added insult to injury: One morning I was called into the nursery and told:" Miss Mary (the daughter) made her bed wet.Clean it up!" This religious Christian Scientist also asked my mother on a Sunday (!) to chop wood for the fireplace, a task not on any day required of a maid and certainly never of a cook.

My mother ,intimidated by circumstances, wanted to comply, but at my urging refused to do it. This did it for me: I figured I had faced the Gestapo, we were here not in Nazi Germany ,Britain must have laws to protect even refugees.

We had befriended simple laborers from the village who had come to work occasionally.They saw how we were treated and tried to find another place for us. Emboldened ,I went to the government employment office and told them of our plight. Our Christian Science mistress was blacklisted by the local agency and would not find any servants very soon, according to our friendly carpenter who told us of a nice place not far from where we were.

GORDLETON MILL HOUSE .

Mrs. CAMPBELL, our new employer ,was a beautiful young Australian woman.She looked like Dina Merril, always immaculately dressed,her demeanor that of a real lady. She had two small children, a boy Lorne of about 7 years of age and a younger little girl. They were always with their "Nanny".The household also included Mrs. C.'s mother. We never met Mr.C ,the husband,a Scottish highlander.He seemed to be

abroad somewhere in military service.

Gordleton Mill was a rambling old (18th century) house.To reach our bedroom we had to climb up a creaky, musty old staircase.So we spent the scarce leisure time in the large and airier kitchen.

Mrs. Campbell frequently had guests for dinner,or tea , some also stayed overnight. So again there was early morning tea to be served. For dinner the silver and crystal had to sparkle. they used to have five servants in that house and it was impossible with us alone to reach that level of perfection. Even butter had to be brought to the table in tiny balls -rolled between two corrugated boards- a very time consuming process. At least Mrs. C realized that more help was needed and recalled one of her former maids,Violet,for part time work.

It was the first time we met a professional British domestic servant and it was an education; she let us profit from her vast experience and taught us many skills and shortcuts, Violet was a frail,sweet,soft-spoken girl,probably in her twenties but already worn out.She was brought up to believe that servitude was her destiny- she heard it always in church.God did not want her kind to have higher aspirations. (If anything came out of W.W.II it was a great social leveller).She eventually got married ,had her own home ,but died young in childbirth.

My "Servier Kurs " in Vienna had taught me how to be a proper English maid , specifically how to set a table ,how to serve-food from left, drinks from the right-and how to carve: fish,fowl,beef and mutton. One of the many parties at G.M.H stands out in my memory: my mother as usual had cooked a four or five course dinner. I had to wait at table and also carve the fish and meat at the sideboard,as there was no male host. One of the guests was a young officer. After I had carved and served the fish, I proceeded to carve the turkey when the young man appeared at my side and offered to do the carving himself. While helping , he whispered to me:" I have never seen a more efficient maid!" He did not realize he had given me a lefthanded compliment.It put my situation in sharp focus: here I was, a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna with an additional three years of study at the University towards a doctorate in history of art but now a very bleak future to look forward to.....

A good example of class division was Mrs.C's mother-a real snob. At one of the many tea parties I overheard her saying:" I would not associate with her,she has only three maids!" forgetting that her daughter no longer had five. Mrs.C"s children had a typical upper class upbringing. Lorne (I remember the name as it sounded so strange) was blond

very fair , fine chiseled features like his mother.The little girl had dark hair and a ruddy complexion. Both children never smiled.They spent all their time tucked away with their nanny in the nursery. The nanny herself was always serious, a pale young woman.No child like noises ever emanated from their room. Every afternoon ,at tea time the children were brought to visit their mother and grandmother for about a half hour into the drawingroom. There they sat demurely and quietly. "Children should be seen ,not heard!" - a Victorian saying? No wonder British boys became such cruel devils once they were sent to Public or boarding school.(I don't know how girls were affected.)

Every month a young man,Henry, came to -guess what-wind all the clocks in the house. He was a nice pleasant chap. Through him we met his boss and his family, Mr.Baker,his wife Vera and daughter Rita.They became our lifelong friends. Mr. Baker looked like Leslie Howard, a fine ,well-educated "gentleman" (though not of the British nobility). He ran a jewelry and watchmaker store. This family opened their home and their hearts to us. We spent many Sundays with them in their house he called "Verona". I especially remember Christmas when they invited us to share their meal and we relaxed in front of a roaring fire. For many years Mr. Baker (as I always called him) wrote to us in a beautiful calligraphic hand until his wife informed us of his passing.I continued to be in touch with Vera until her letters ceased to come. Henry once gave me a ride on his motorcycle.I promptly fell off and never again rode another one. Poor Henry was wounded during the war and spent the rest of his short life paralyzed.

Mr.Thomas ,the gardener,took care of the large property.There was a profusion of flowers and vegetables. In contrast to the Campbell mansion the Thomas family lived in a tiny cottage -a hovel would be a better description. Those simple people too offered us warm hospitality on our day off. To be with them was depressing. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and their daughter Eva all lived in one dark room. We tactfully declined to share a meal with them, as food was more plentiful for us in Mrs.C.'s house, So we went there for companionship and friendship,

Mrs. Campbell lent me a bicycle and also showed me a safer way to get on and off,so I was able to relax a bit by riding around occasionally. Many times after a visit to the Bakers who lived about 1 -1½ hours away in Lymington,we had to walk home in total darkness along a deserted country road. We never once felt apprehensive.Robbers,holdups did not exist in the English country side at that time.No matter what our

circumstances, Britain offered us a feeling of security our own country denied us.

THE ENGLISH FIREPLACE

My children all love a fireplace. I wonder if they would be so crazy about it;if it were the only source of heat.

One of the morning duties of a parlourmaid was to prepare the hearth, to clear it of ashes from previous use and lay the paper and kindling to be lit when so desired. Every room had a fireplace; luckily not every room was heated daily. At Gordleton Mills the task was more onerous. The fireplace in the drawing room not only was used every day, the bricks around it had to be whitewashed every morning. This non-artistic painting finally got to me. Nobody appreciated my thorough cleaning of all the nooks and crannies in that ancient abode or the scrubbing of three bathtubs, even after the dog had been given a bath in one, but missing whitewashing that sooty hearth just once was considered unforgivable by Mrs.C_s mother. So what did I finally do? On especially hectic mornings I swept the dust under a huge antique armoire.

Rich or poor ,you were never comfortable in the winter without central heating. You roasted in front and your back was freezing.The only way to feel comfortable would have been to rotate like a broiler on a spit or curl up in overstuffed chairs.

ENGLISH DENTISTS

After we lived in England for a while, we found to our amazement that most people,young and old, had false teeth.Mrs.Campbell ,an Australian, was the exeption. Right or wrong ,it was blamed on a diet of white bread. To relieve dental pain one simply pulled a tooth.People were actually proud of their dentures. When I developed some pain in one tooth I looked for a dentist unaware what English dentistry was like.The first one immediately approached me with pliers,the second one was so drunk I jumped out of the chair as soon as his breath hit me.Eventually I fpund one in Bournemouth,a famous resort on the west coast.He filled my aching tooth.He charged me very little,told me he was Jewish and therefore sympathetic to our plight.In his office I saw central heating for the first time.

STATUS AS ENEMY ALIEN

On September 13,1939 Hitler invaded Poland and two days later Britain declared war on the German Reich.We had befriended two maids from another

house; as German nationals they were recalled home.

As preposterous as it may sound,we Jews - refugees from Nazi oppression were considered potential enemy aliens.We were brought before a tribunal to be classified either "A": friendly or "B" :enemy alien. Such was the paranoia, Jewish Austrian and German men were interned in the Kitchener camp,some shipped to the Isle of Man or sent to Australia.Well we had lost our home already ,were not strangers to persecution so this treatment was less shocking to us than what happened to Japanese Americans later in the U.S.A.

Again , luck or fate was with us. Police went around checking up on aliens in the area. The Thomas and Baker families gave such glowing references about us that we got an "A" rating without going before the tribunal. - Nearby worked a middleaged Jewish German woman in one of the households. She had no relatives,no friends to put in a good word for her. The tribunal classified her "B" ,not trustworthy. She had to leave the coastal area. Eventually all aliens had to move inland.As Hitler gobbled up one European countryafter another,an invasion of England seemed likely.

Meanwhile life for us was hard but peaceful.Joe came on a visitor's visa to London and was anxious for me to join him. I was torn between leaving my mother and not being with him. There was also the question of what to live on. Sometime in the late '38 I had written to Prof.Sedlmayr head of the"Kunsthistorische Institut"at the University of Vienna to see if he could get me in touch with people in the Art Historic field in England. Officially he followed the Nazi line but he sent the names of two professors: Warburg and Gombrich. The latter wrote to me that he and his colleague were themselves refugees and unable to find work in their own profession. Professor Gombrich later became world famous for his books on the history of art.

I took the risk and gave Mrs.C. my notice ,telling her that I would try to find work in my real profession,namely as an artist. At that point it was permissible ,if not probable to find work in other fields. Mrs.Campbell was very gracious about my decision.She still had my mother, a valuable cook. A maid was easier to replace.The change in attitude toward me was startling: I served tea in the afternoon ,silently and unobtusively. All of a sudden Mrs.C.'s mother asked me about my plans and the few guests there also showed a great deal of interest. Having ceased being a domestic ,the non-person turned into a human being (the frog became a princess?)

LONDON - PEACE AND QUIET BEFORE THE STORM.

After more than half a century many details of my life in London are forgotten but certain events are burnt deeply in my memory.As my first lodging I rented a small room on the top floor of a shabby rooming house. It was freezing cold,drafty, the bedding (sheets, pillows and all)wet. I left in the middle of the night and walked shivering through dense fog until I reached Joe's quarters. Another unforgettable slice of London life was the ENGLISH BATH. The bathroom was communal.If you desired a bath -and the desire grew less strong every time you took one-you descended or climbed up to the bathroom armed with coins.With a twopence (pronounced tuppence) you lit a gas jet and got about two inches of hot water. As this cooled quickly in that ice cold tub you kept putting more coins into the slot. You hardly ever reached more than six inches,because you cleaned yourself rapidly to get out of there. Those were inconveniences; nothing to compare with what people suffered in continental Europe.

Eventually I found some freelance artwork,Joe a clandestine job with a furrier and we moved to a nice large room in Collingham Place.The landlady was a very friendly old Christian Scientist who unfortunately because of her belief, refused treatment for cancer. I cooked rabbit stew and chicken giblets on a little gas ring on the floor.Joe gave me a little kitten "Lucky" whose story I told someplace else. We played lawntennis,went to the theatre and lived in a fool's paradise,because we knew reality would soon catch up with us.And it did with a vengeance.

Joe got a visa to go to the U.S.A. We got married on May 20 1940 and he left the next day. Friends of ours had tied the knot a few months earlier.Their English was very bad so when the judge asked him:"Do you take this woman to be your LAWFUL wife?" he repeated:" I take this woman to be my AWFUL wife." They were the witnesses ar our wedding and when the same question was asked ,we had trouble not to burst out laughing.

My mother still worked for Mrs.C. but invasion jitters began and all aliens had to leave coastal areas.I had been very lonely and depressed after Joe left me and was glad to be reunited with my mother.We rented a small room and supported ourselves crocheting gloves - an enterprise arranged by some refugee committee.

Hitler never invaded the British Isles but he certainly tried.The airraids started soon after JOe's departure. Night after night the bombs fell on London,causing death and destruction. We took shelter every night in the basement of a church where heavy stoneslabs above afforded some

protection.We slept there (or tried to) with hundreds of other people all huddled together. In the morning ,we warily and wearily picked our way home ,sometimes through the rubble of houses destroyed nearby. It took me many,many years in America not to feel panicstricken whenever I heard the wailing of a siren.Sometimes there were air raids during the day. I found myself once on Oxfordstreet when the alarm sounded.Anxious to find an air raid shelter I ran down a flight of steps thinking they would lead to the Underground train. A man grabbed me and pulled me upstairs;again I tried to run down when two other men also took me up. Turned out I had tried to find shelter in a man's lavatory. So I watched a "dog fight" from the street.It was very unreal: two planes fighting each other high above the netting and blimps that were strung across the city.Many books have been written and films produced about the remarkable job the RAF did.These heroic pilots gave Britain a feeling of confidence. My admiration for the British people,their courage and sangfroid grew during these trying months.As I mentioned before [illegible] ,the war was a great equalizer. Sometimes the sirens sounded during the day and then the English spirit and tenacity came to the fore.As soon as the wailing started ,our landlady said :"Let's have a spot of tea!" and made us almost feel cozy and secure,sitting under the staircase until the steady sound of the "All clear" released us from our hiding place.When your life is threatened,a strange feeling of fatalism overcomes you. I was too numb to feel fear, facing the Gestapo and the same equanimity overcame me during the air raids. Joe was terribly upset reading about the war in the papers but we went from day to night and night to day in an almost unnatural calm.The inevitability of a situation releases certain chemicals in your brain (endorphins?) you normally don't have at your disposal.

FAREWELL TO EUROPE- HELLO U.S.A

Werner von Braun's devastating V-2 bombs were still to come,but before their horrible arrival Joe got us the affidavits to join him in New York. Registering my mother's name instead of my own way back in May1938 enabled my mother to come with me.By October 1940 her quota had been reached and I as wife of a resident did not need one.So luck or foresight was with us again.

VICTORIA STATION AND THE MILITARY

We were to sail from Glasgow. We boarded the train at Victoria station

in the evening during an air raid. Departure was held up for perhaps thirty minutes ,which seemed like hours.We were naturally nervous but not as apprehensive as a group of officers in our compartment.For months air raids had been a nightly occurrence to us,but to these men it was a new experience. They had been stationed in the country and not yet been sent to fight. Here we were under a huge glass dome,sitting ducks.All of us heaved a sigh of relief when the train finally left London and chugged northward .

GLASGOW

In Glasgow we went to a hotel near the harbour and ordered "High Tea". What the "tapas" is to the Spanish this late afternoon tea is a highlight for theEnglish.Finger sandwiches ,scones ,cakes- a delightful meal. For a brief moment we were in the lap of luxury,enjoying all the goodies offered. This was only topped by a noiseless night of undisturbed sleep in beds with clean white sheets,another luxury we had not experienced in months.

The next morning we boarded the S.S."CAMERONIA" which,flanked by destroyers,took us on a zig-zag route to avoid U-boats,finally to freedom and a new life in theUnited States of America.

EPILOGUE

In 1938 I graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (where Hitler had tried to get in and was rejected) and also studied History of Art at the University.

I found out in the USA only experience counts, not schooling. Because of wartime all over Europe metal was scarce so I found a job designing jewelry made of plaster that was afterwards painted. A button manufacturer heard of me and hired me, I designed buttons out of plaster for expensive clothes which were then plated in gold, silver or copper vats.

When the USA joined the war, my boss was drafted. I wanted to do my part too I knew how to make blue prints and applied at BELL LABS for a job. The firm up to then had never hired Jews, Blacks or Italians. But the government was in charge now. I had more strikes against ms: I was a woman and not yet a citizen. But I passed their test and was hired. I spent five years there, finding out afterwards I had worked on plans for RADAR a wonderful feeling, after all the airraids we had been subjected to in London. When the war was over, all people who were not "Wasps" were dismissed. One of my girlfriends who was a "Wasp" stayed with BEllLabs until her retirement. (Their policy has changed meanwhile,)

I now designed nursery pictures in a small studio. One day while emptying my garbage pail I found a crumpled up paper. It was a notice from the RED CRoss : my grandfather and his daughter had been killed in AUSCHWITZ . It was a terrible shock. My husband had meant well but I was entitled to know the truth. I had learned a while ago that tney both had been taken to Theresien stadt (Teresin) the so-called "good" concentrationcamp My grandfather Kommerzialrat Ludwig Rappeport was 91 or 92 when they killed him. He had received a gold medal for services to his country. My aunt Dr. Terese (Tercsi) R. had been a bacteriologist (a rare job for a woman in the early nineties). We had been close. My grandfather had taken me mountain climbing when he was in his eighties. Outside my studio was a baby carriage. Holding the crumpled paper in my hand I looked at my son: he gave me confidence in a better future.